PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Mr. Pope supposed the story of this play to have been borrowed from a novel of Boccace; but he was mistaken, as an imitation of it is found in an old story-book entitled Westward for Smelts. This imitation differs in as many particulars from the Italian novelist, as from Shakspeare, though they concur in some material parts of the fable. It was published in a quarto pamphlet 1603. This is the only copy of it which I have hitherto seen.

There is a late entry of it in the books of the Stationers' Company, Jan. 1619, where it is said to have been written by Kitt of Kingston. STEEVENS.

The taje in Westward for Smelts, which I published some years ago, I shall subjoin to this play. The only part of the fable, however, which can be pronounced with certainty to be drawn from thence, is, Imogen's wandering about after Pisanio has left her in the forest; her being almost famished ; and being taken, at a subsequent period, into the service of the Roman General as a page. The general scheme of Cymbeline Is, in my opinion, formed on Boccace's novel (Day 2, Nov. 9.) and Shakspeare has taken a circumstance from it, that is not mentioned in the other tale. See Act II. Sc. II. It appears from the preface to the old translation of the Decamerone, printed in 1620, that many of the novels had before received an English dress, and had been printed separately: " I know, most worthy lord, (says the printer in his Epistle Dedicatory,) that many of them [the novels of Boccace] *Jiave long since been published before,* as stolen from the original author, and yet not beautified with his sweet style and elocution of phrase, neither savouring of his singular morall applications."

Cymbeline, I imagine, was written in the year 1609. See An Attempt to ascertainithe Order of Shakspeare's Plays, vol. ii. The king from whom the play takes its title began his reign, according to Holinshed, in the 19th year of the reign of Augustus Caesar; and the $1 ay commences in or about the twenty-fourth year of Cymbeline's reign, which was the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus, and the 16th of the Christian sera: notwithstanding which, Shakspeare has peopled Rome with modern Italians; Philario, lachimo, &c. Cymbeline is said to have reigned thirty-five years, leaving at his death two sons, Guiderius and Arviragus. MALONE.

An ancient translation, or rather a deformed and interpolated imitation, of the ninth novel of the second day of the Dacameron